



# THE POETS' MAGAZINE.

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## THE POETRY OF MORTIMER COLLINS.

"Who is that burly fellow, in the loose velvet coat, swinging along in front of us," asked a country friend of mine, a few weeks ago, as we lounged along the shady side of Fleet Street? "That," replied I, "is Mortimer Collins, the poet and novelist." A few days afterwards I, in common with all who admired his genius, was shocked at the announcement of his sudden and unlooked-for death. Dowered by nature with a splendid *physique* one would have said that Death would not dare him to single combat till the sturdy muscles had grown flaccid with age, and the fine head had been crowned with snow; but in the midst of his strength, and when his fame was growing to the proportions merited by his ability, he was struck down, and his bright and sparkling pen was dropped for ever. No literary man in these days worked with more unflagging zeal, and few who deserved so much could have retained, as he did, a cheery content in the face of such inadequate recognition as he received at the hands of the reading public. Since the publication of a thin octavo volume of poems—printed by McGlashan, of Dublin, and bound in orange cloth (which in my copy has grown yellow)—in 1855, he has poured forth a ceaseless stream of bright and happy thoughts, I am afraid to say how many novels, and all the time emitted a running fire of *vers de société*, besides contributing to most of the journals, from *The Press* to the *Whitehall Review*. A life, indeed, in which there was little relaxation, but one in which there were yet many joys; and if, to use a common phrase, "his nose was kept to the grindstone," his heart was as free, his fancy as bright, his laugh as

cheerful, his face as smiling as if the hardest of hard work were mere pastime. No doubt he often longed for repose—that sort of repose which he described so charmingly—but he never obtained it, and sometimes he must have hummed over a verse of his own, written long ago in “The Ivory Gate”—

“Ah! the vision of dawn is leisure—  
But the truth of day is toil:  
And we pass from dreams of pleasure  
To the world's unstayed turmoil.  
Perchance beyond the river  
Which guards the realms of Fate,  
Our spirits may dwell for ever  
'Mong dreams of the Ivory Gate.”

One might speak of Collins as a novelist, whose charming pages have carried many readers pleasantly along, and been the source of much quiet delight; or as a journalist who was an able political writer, and could dash off a column of gossip in an almost unequalled style; or as a humourist whose *jeux d'esprit* flashed, rippled, stung, or tickled, as the fancy seized him; or as a boon companion and *bon vivant* of the first order who, as it has been well put, “would crack you some scholarly nut, make you a Greek pun, or tell a good story with any man in London;” or as a straightforward, bluff Englishman, clear and kindly to the core, genial and “lovable as a great Newfoundland dog,” and yet with that strong dash of Bohemianism and eccentricity which lent *piquancy* to his nature, and made him the very type of a man to shine in a social gathering; or as a scholar of respectable classical attainments and considerable scientific lore, well read in much quaint literature; but, after all, it is as a lyrist that he will be best known to posterity, and it is in that capacity that he should be presented to the readers of this magazine.

It may, however, be permitted to run over a few facts connected with his life, in a cursory and rapid manner, before proceeding to estimate the value, or display some of the beauties of his poetry. He was born in Plymouth in 1827, and was educated partly at a private, and afterwards at the Grammar School of that town. He began his public life, I believe, as editor of a news-

paper in his native town, though he had for years contributed to the "Poet's Corner" of the Bristol journals. Subsequently he became a teacher, or private tutor, roamed about a good deal, and was a thorough-paced Bohemian; but at length he found his way to London, and began writing for the press. He was on the staff of a weekly journal called *The Press*, which fought against the radical *Leader* for the first place as a weekly of the *Saturday Review* order, and his contributions to its pages, if not the flower of the production, were, at least, the most enjoyable, sparkling, and incisive of its articles. When, about twelve years ago, Earl Beauchamp, then member for Tewkesbury, started *The Realm*, a weekly Conservative review, which anticipated, however, some of the characteristic features of such a paper as the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Collins' pen was put in requisition, and he continued to write for it till its collapse. Since then he has written for the *Globe* and other Conservative organs, and, of late, scarcely a number of *Punch* appeared that was not embellished by sparks of his fun. Though his "Idylls and Rhymes" were published so long ago as 1855, and he had contributed some of his best pieces to the *Dublin University Magazine*, *Temple Bar*, and other monthlies, it was the *vers de société* which appeared in the *Owl* that first attracted public attention to Collins as a poet; and, in 1860, his "Summer Songs" met with a very flattering reception. Since then "The Inn of Strange Meetings, and other Poems" appeared in 1871, and that quaint legend of "British Birds," cast in the Greek mould of Aristophanes, was published the following year. His first novel—"Who is the Heir"—appeared, I believe, in 1865, and scarcely a year has passed since in which one or two others have not come from his prolific pen. These novels had at one time considerable repute, but since the new "fleshly school" of sensationalism—of which Miss Rhoda Broughton and Ouida are perhaps the stars—has come into repute, his fictions have been less eagerly looked for; and though, perhaps, he never rose beyond the intermediate strata of the second-class of novelists, and his stories are not perfect samples of artistic construction, yet they are all light and readable reading, while if they do not astonish by their strong situations and startling incidents, they are free from those wild improbabilities which characterize some popular books,



satisfy us by their pretty pictures, and leave pleasant reminiscences of quiet, rich, and sparkling humour. The present year promised to be the busiest of his life. "Blacksmith and Scholar" and "A Fight with Fortune," are already completed, "A Village Comedy" has run for some time in the *Pictorial World*, and just before his death he wrote the second instalment of "The Two Margarets" for the *Whitehall Review*." In the October number of the *New Quarterly*, the last article he wrote—"Aristophanes"—will appear, and be read with melancholy interest by his many admirers. He had for some time been suffering more or less from heart disease, and found that change and partial rest were necessary; and it was while on his way from his residence at Knowl Hill, Surrey, to his daughter's house at Richmond, that he was seized with the attack which proved fatal within forty-eight hours. His married life was happy, and he was exemplary in his domestic relations, but in strict justice it must be said that society had irresistible charms for him, and that he was sometimes betrayed into greater excess than was good for so hard a worker. He died on the 28th of July, having just completed his 49th year; and, as Edmund Yates pointed out in the *World*, the verses called "A July Fern Leaf," seem strangely enough to have forecast the time and place of his death:—

"Stern hours have the merciless Fates  
 Plotted for all who die;  
 But looking down upon Richmond aits,  
 Where the merles sing low to their amorous mates,  
     Who cares to ask them why?  
     We'll have wit, love, wine,  
     Ere thy days divine  
                 Wither, July!

For the blossom of youth must fade,  
 And the vigour of life must fly;  
 Yet to-day is ours with its odorous shade,  
 And the loving eyes which soon betrayed,  
     Dreams in the heart that lie;  
     Swift Life's stream flows,  
     But, alas, who knows  
                 Whither July?



He was looking down upon "Richmond aits" when, amidst the splendours of a July sky he, like the river whose beauties he knew so well, and sang so exquisitely, passed away "who knows whither?"

With him passed away not only a typical Englishman, but a lyric poet than whom few stand higher—except those greatest of names that are enrolled on the very apex of the summer-lit Parnassus. With a frame like Hercules his touch was as light as the tread of the fairy in the hare-bell; while the grace with which his pen flashed along the sparkling lines forms a strong contrast to the brawny fingers that wielded it—the pen that answered responsive to the ripple of the river, the glancing of the sunshine athwart the "interminable aisles of greenery," the nodding of the lily upon its stalk, the song of the aëry songster half lost in the immensity of blue, or wholly hidden amid the foliage of waving woodlands: that in a few clear strokes rounded off an epigram, painted a picture, drew a portrait, flashed out a truth "deep as the centre" yet apparently light as gossamer; or, barbed with trenchant satire, that flew straight to its mark, and invariably planted its subtle poison in the most vulnerable place. It may be that those who regard poetry from a serious, or philosophical, or coldly elevated stand-point, may query the title "poet" as applied to Mortimer Collins; that those who love the muse best in cypress, with high prophetic tone, flashing eye, and a voice solemn and grand as the diapason, may hesitate before casting the oaken crown upon his tomb; but those who, like Burns, link arms with the genius of Mirth, and expand in the society of Fun and Frolic, those who see poetry in a blue eye, the rounded and graceful outlines of a pretty woman's form, or feel it in the throb of early manhood's love, will realize him as a true prince among the charmed band, and laugh at his touches of finely humourous fancy, or be hushed by his half sad half gay appeals to the heart. There may be no music in his song for those who condescend to nothing simpler than the oratorio or those wierdly solemn tones of Beethoven in his grandest mood, but he is nothing but music to those who revel in the graceful touches of Donizetti, or the harmonious fancies of Mozart and Rossini. He would have been a stranger or an alien in the cold, marble, perfect-pillared halls of science and meta

physics, but he was all soul and light in the brilliant drawing room, or on the flower-painted lawn, where youth and beauty interchange glances of love, and where young hearts dance to the strains of Strauss, or melt into poesy over the dry leaves of a rose that lie odorous between the pages of a faded note penned by a hand that has vanished. Collins was essentially a poet of society, of the picnic, of the archery meeting, of the county ball, and the croquet lawn; and though, perhaps, greater possibilities slept within him, he is exceeded by no living singer in his own class, and by few of the same order that are gone. He may, as I have said, be placed low in the second class of novelists, but he stands proudly and deservedly in the front rank of singers of *vers de société*. "His songs," said one of the ablest of his critics, twenty years ago, "are fine, rich, mosaic lyrics, thrown off from the heart as lightly as the thrush flings out her song from her full throat," and that exactly characterises the style of these dainty trifles that glitter on the book of English poetry as a cluster of precious stones in the dark hair of beauty. But he had also fine touches of true feeling and clear thought that bring him within the charmed circle where Praed stands alone, and into which Lockyer, Swinburne, and Rosetti, in his better moods, enter by right. Much of his poetry is faulty in epithet—now sinning in pompousness, now in colloquial baldness—but there is hardly a verse that he has written that is not instinct with music, or touches of grace and fancy. If he could not at all times master perfection of form, he had the soul of poetry, or as he puts it himself in the charming preface to "Summer Songs,"—"Enough for me, seeing that I have to live by scribbling endless squibs and leaders with this grey goose quill which I grasp, that even *Globe's* and *Athenæum's* admit some fancy, melody, power of versifying, to characterize these rhymes which I write. Yet, after all, would that I had been born a poet." Poetry with him was not the serious business of life. With Charles Lamb, who pointed to the ledgers in the India House as his real works, he might have appealed to his "endless squibs, leaders" and novels, as evidence of his assiduity—for his poetry was merely his pastime and pleasure. Had Providence thrown him into circumstances where he could have cultivated his undoubted poetical gift, the result might have been very different,

but, as it is, for lightness, brightness, fancifulness, and harmoniousness, always overlying quaint, half-shy, yet true, and tender feeling, it would be difficult to match a few of the lyrics of Mortimer Collins.

Take two or three samples of his various styles of writing—and we cannot do better than begin by demonstrating how quaint and rich were his humorous conceits. Perhaps “The Loyal Abbess,” and “My Old Coat,” if not the best, are fair examples of his power in this department. Everybody acquainted with his works remembers the bold and manly young knight, followed by his burly squire, who rode gaily up to the convent gate, demanded the opening of the portals, and asserted his determination to kiss the lovely Abbess “by stout King Harry’s orders.”

O then what a clatter, and flutter, and flush—

O then how the innocent creatures blush

At the notion irreligious!

But quick from the crowd young sister Fan

Comes tripping demurely as fast as she can,

Saying, “Don’t kiss the Abbess, you naughty young man:

Kiss *me!* It will be less sacrilegious.”

Said the stately Abbess, “Miss Fanny, please,

Go and do penance alone on your knees:

Pert creature, how dare you address him?”

Then she turned to the portal, and said, “Sir Knight!

Though what you require is unusual quite—

Yet from your charger be pleased to alight:

*I’ll be loyal to my liege, God bless him!”*

The last line, which I italicize, is exquisite, and is a fitting climax to the quaint slyness of the whole piece. “My Old Coat,” though, probably, falling more directly under the heading of fanciful sentiment than quaint conceit, may yet be instanced as displaying much of the latter faculty. Here is a part of it:—

This old velvet coat has grown queer I admit,

And changed is the colour, and loose is the fit;

Though to beauty it certainly cannot aspire,

’Tis a cosy old coat for a seat by the fire.



When I first put it on it was awfully swell,  
 I went to a picnic, met Lucy Lefel,  
 Made a hole in the heart of that sweet little girl,  
 And disjoined the nose of her lover, the Earl.  
 We rambled away, o'er the moorland together :  
*My coat was bright purple, and so was the heather,*  
*And so was the sunset that blazed in the west,*  
 As Lucy's fair tresses were laid on my breast.  
 We plighted our troth 'neath that sunset aflame,  
*But Lucy returned to the Earl all the same ;*  
*She's a grandmamma now, and is going down hill ;*  
*But my old velvet coat is a friend to me still.*  
 It was *built by a tailor* of mighty renown,  
 Whose art is no longer the talk of the town :  
 A magical picture my memory weaves,  
 When I thrust my tired arms through its old cosy  
 sleeves.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ah, gone is the age of wild doings at Court,  
 Rotten-boroughs, knee-breeches, hair-triggers, and port ;  
 Still I've got a magnum to moisten my throat,  
 And I'll drink to the past in my old tattered coat.

The sentiment, it is true, is neither very elevated, nor pretentious, but some of the touches, and the epithet "built by a tailor," are quite characteristic of Collins. I am tempted to give others, but forbear. Now let us turn to his quiet and unobtrusive power of transferring a picture to his page, or transferring landscape into poetry. Two or three examples occur to me at once, and entire poems might be quoted in illustration. Take these fragments, however, from "Marigold," "Rupert's Ring," and "The Dean's Daughter," part of which I shall have to refer to presently for another purpose—for in this gem all his styles are gathered into one brilliant focus :—

When Summer brooded on her garden plot,  
 How lazily the brooklet's wave slipped by !  
 The cooing doves made sleepy melody,  
 The bees grew drowsy in their meliot,

The burnt out odour of magnolia bloom  
 Came stealing through the arcades to love's own darkened room.  
 That breathes of the langour of summer, and the lazy enjoyment  
 of listlessness by some lovely convalescent.

Wooing! ah me, amidst the pleasant woods,  
 And by the sea's wild marge, and on *the heath*  
*Which the sun purples in his painting moods,*  
 How sweet to bind a foolish wild-flower wreath  
 For the gay girl one loves! Strange solitudes  
 Where the grey falcon floats, while underneath  
 The woods are hushed—no birds their songs renewing:  
 These are the fit localities for wooing.

Before going to "The Dean's Daughter," stay one moment,  
 lazy lover—who, in this sweltering weather, art unable to breathe  
 thy tale of passion, and feel the hot still air of noon on this bit from  
 "The Swallow"—

Yes, I long for the magic of indolent hours,  
 The glamour of amorous eyes,  
 When *the breeze which fluttered mid fern and flowers,*  
*In the noon's rich languor dies,*  
*When bees grow drowsy in honey bells,*  
*And the brown lark sleeps in her nest,*  
 And a vernal vision of gladness swells  
 One soft white breast.

"The Dean's Daughter," as I have already said, is a complete  
 mosaic—a single setting—in which all the colours of his pallet are  
 found harmonized into a faultless work. The three first stanzas  
 form a matchless picture of a drowsy deanery, the fourth hits off  
 in eight lines the dean and his peculiarities, the next is one of his  
 prettiest bits of female portraiture, and the last, as if to gather all  
 up, is picture, sentiment, reminiscence, and gay satire all in one.  
 Its painting is sunny and warm, and full of quiet repose.  
 Its expressions are full of felicitousness; its rhythm flows on smooth  
 and round, its rhymes seem to come without labour and fall into  
 their places without being noticed, and the conclusion, which halts  
 for a moment between pathos and fun, finally comes suddenly upon

the reader, flashing in keen trenchant sarcasm irresistably comic in character. Here is the poem :—

Autumnal sunshine seems to fall  
 With riper beauty, mellow, brighter,  
 On every favoured garden wall  
 Whose owner wears the mystic mitre :  
 And apricots and peaches grow,  
 With hues no cloudy weather weakens,  
 To ripeness laymen never know—  
 For deans, and canons, and archdeacons.  
 Dean Willmott's was a pleasant place,  
 Close under the cathedral shadows ;  
 Old elm trees lent it antique grace ;  
 A river wandered through the meadows.  
 Well-ordered vines and fruit trees filled  
 The terrace walks ; no branch had gone astray,  
 Since monks in horticulture skilled  
 Had planned those gardens for their monast'ry.  
 Calm, silent, sunny ; *whispereth*  
*No tone about that sleepy deanery,*  
*Save when the mighty organ's breath*  
*Came husht through endless aisles of greenery.*  
 No eastern breezes swung in air  
 The great elm-boughs, or crisped the ivy :  
 The powers of nature seemed serene,  
 Dean Willmott's motto was "Dormivi."  
 Dean Willmott's mental life was spent  
 In Arabic and architecture :  
 On both of these most eloquent—  
 It was a treat to hear him lecture.  
 The dinners were exceeding fine,  
 His quiet jests extremely witty,  
 He kept the very best port wine  
 In that superb cathedral city.  
 But O, the daughter of the Dean !  
 The Laureate's self could not describe her ;  
 So sweet a creature ne'er was seen  
 Beside Eurotas, Xanthus, Tiber.



So light a foot, a lip so red,  
 A waist so delicately slender—  
 Not Cyprus, fresh from Ocean's bed,  
 Was half as white, and soft, and tender.

Heigho! the daughter of the Dean!  
 Beneath those elm-trees apostolic,  
 While autumn's sunlight danced between,  
 We two had many a merry frolic.  
 Sweet Sybil Willmott! long ago  
 To your young heart was love a visitor:  
*And often have I wished to know—*  
*How you could marry a solicitor!*

Now, I must endeavour to find room for one or two samples of love sentiments in fanciful settings, and I find some difficulty in choosing among the wealth which shines on almost every page. "Little Laurette" is too long, but it is as rich as any. Let us take "Violets at Home," and part of "Unlimited Loo"—the former tenderly quaint, the latter quaintly bantering:—

O happy buds of violet!  
 I give them to my sweet, and she  
 Puts them where something sweeter yet  
 Must always be.

White violets find whiter nest:  
 For fairest flowers how fair a fate!  
 For me remain, O fragrant breast,  
 Inviolatè.

That sounds like Herrick, or Sydney, or Praed—or anybody that is most celebrated for such conceits.

Loo's a voice most delicious to carol  
 Mr. Tennyson's songs to the harp;  
 She can manage a light double barrel;  
 She can angle for trout or for carp;  
 So wisely she talks about science  
 You'd think her a regular blue;  
 She sets every rule at defiance,  
 And we style her Unlimited Loo.

She can pull a stroke oar on the river  
 Like that muscular hero Tom Brown;  
 She can ride, and at fences don't quiver  
 Where many a hunter goes down:  
 She's plucky, but vastly more pleasant  
 Than most of the nursery crew;  
 She can shoot, dress, and carve a cock-pheasant,  
 This wilful Unlimited Loo.

The wild little rogue is a Tory,  
 And oft will her satire make mad  
 Some Whig, as he tells his dull story,  
 Some crass platitudinous Rad.  
 She makes petticoats, puns, puddings, purses;  
 There's nothing on earth she can't do:  
 Poor Praed couldn't put into verses  
 The powers of Unlimited Loo.

Of course she's a dab at flirtation:  
 I'd not give a handful of dirt,  
 Or a copy of Bright's last oration,  
 For a girl who's not able to flirt.  
 I heartily pity the sinner  
 Who tries the young rebel to woo:  
 But I envy the man who shall win her—  
 The charming Unlimited Loo.

There, that is gay, neat, witty, catching, and a perfect picture;  
 and there are scores of such which he threw off at odd half hours,  
 and which lie scattered in many magazines. But there were  
 deeper strains in him, as witness "The Inn of Strange Meetings,"  
 and "A Poet's Philosophy," and there are many casual lines, fre-  
 quent epithets, which, as I said some time ago, vent deep truths in  
 airy form. Let me give one or two before concluding:—

\* \* \* \* \* She into her wine-dark hair  
 Braided white violets—whiter than Despair,  
 And half as sweet as Love.

\* \* \* \* \* The bitter North  
 Keen cutting as an Arab Scimitar.

With it (love) the air we breathe intoxicates  
 Our spirits with unceasing glee : the sky  
 Rains music from its blue immensity :  
 Rhyme, rhyme immortal on our utterance waits,  
 No end or efflux of our joy can come—  
 For we are gods, and earth's Elysium.

\* \* \* \* \* Song's susurrus  
 Is the soul's wine throughout the weary day.

Death is the ocean of immortal rest,  
 And what is sleep? A bath our angel brings  
 Of the same lymph fed by the self-same springs.

We drink the juices of Despair  
 From life's crushed grape,  
 The giant of night wore ruby Mars  
 As a gem on his finger.

O! is there not pleasure and pain?  
 And pleasure is pain's undoing,  
 And sunshine also and rain?  
 And rain's the sun's sweet wooing.

I might go on multiplying such detached passages almost indefinitely, but the loving reader will find them easily for himself. Beneath all this airy banter, this flashing joke, and gay demeanour, there were voids deep in his nature, and, it may be, springs of profounder thought and feeling. By such as these, however, he has made his mark, and so long as hearts love, and blood tingles in hot veins, Mortimer Collins will find an auditory. There was a sadness in his "sudden taking off," little time given for preparation for sterner realities, but let us hope that he realized the assurance expressed in one of his serious poems :—

And I shall pass into the morning land,  
 As now from sleep into the life of morn;  
 Live the new life of the new world, unshorn  
 Of the swift brain, the executing hand:  
 See the dense darkness suddenly withdrawn  
 As when Orion's sightless eyes discerned the dawn!



I shall behold it : I shall see the utter  
 Glory of sunrise heretofore unseen,  
 Fresh'ning the woodland ways with brighter green,  
 And calling into life all wings that flutter,  
 All throats of music, and all eyes of light,  
 And driving o'er the verge the intolerable night.

W. GIBSON.

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STREWN ASHES.

BY ALFRED HARBLON.

HYMN TO LETHE.

INTEREA videt Ceneas in valle reductâ  
 Seclusum nemus, et virgulta sonantia silvis,  
 Lethæumque, domos placidas qui prænatat, amnem.

\* \* \*

Animæ quibus altera fato  
 Corpora debentur, Lethœi ad fluminis undam  
 Securos latices et longa oblivia potant.

\* \* \*

Has omnes ubi mille rotam volvêre per annos,  
 Lethæum ad fluvium deus evocat agmine magno ;  
 Scilicet immemores supera ut convexa revisant,  
 Rursus et incipiant in corpora velle reverti.

*Virgil.*

Se tu ricordar non te ne puoi  
 . . . . . or ti rammenta  
 Siccome di Letè beesti ancoi.

*Dante.*

O father of mercy unending,  
 Dim river of midnight and gloom,  
 Behold, we thy children are bending  
 By the shore of thy tide and our tomb ;  
 We have sought for thy boon and thy blessing,  
 From the ends of the earth we have met,  
 To thy pity our passion addressing,  
 We beseech thee for power to forget.

For we said—"Or in earth, or in heaven,  
There is surely a joytime for man,  
Purely perfect and peerless and shriven,  
Nor imbued with a sin or a ban;"  
But there rose from the spirit of pleasure  
The shade of her child, who is Death,  
Who meted our lives with a measure,  
And poisoned our hopes with a breath.

And we found in the wine cup a leaven,  
And a blight in the bud of delight,  
And our chaplets were broken and riven,  
And our loves waxen cold as the night.  
And the hours we had scattered around us  
Wrought chains that have never set free;  
By our gyves that have heavily bound us,  
We summon thee forth from the sea.

By our faith, by our hope, by our longing,  
By our worship of thee and of thine,  
By thy shadowy votaries thronging,  
To quaff of thy generous wine,  
By our crimes and their winepress of sorrow,  
By our bitter remorse and self-hate,  
We pray, that when cometh to-morrow,  
The pangs of to-day may abate.

Through the darkness of life in its dawning,  
Through the vigour of manhood and strength,  
Through the deepening of night, through the morning,  
And noontide of years in their length,  
Through the grave, into hell, through the heaven  
That we scorn with its meaningless bliss,  
We have sought thee, have toiled, and have striven,  
To embrace thee, to cling and to kiss.

By despair that in dying ariseth,  
By the doom and foretasting of death,  
By the anguish of soul it compriseth,  
By the yearning for life and for breath,

By the surfeit of sadness, that springeth  
Out of turmoil, and tumult, and pain,  
By the pangs and the madness it bringeth,  
We invoke and beseech thee again.

We can offer no gift and no guerdon,  
We have come to thee naked and poor,  
O Father our poverty pardon,  
We have sought thee to love and adore ;  
Wrap the past amid branches of myrtle,  
And enclose it with night and with gloom,  
And the memories that hover and hurtle,  
Bury deep in a fathomless tomb.

By the boundless expanse of the heaven,  
By the sun here unknown and unseen,  
By the tempests and thunders down-driven,  
For the sorrows and sins that have been,  
By the Night that we love for her splendour,  
By sweet Sleep, the sad sister of Death,  
By the Earth our fair mother and tender,  
By the lands that we know not beneath :

By the depth of the world's tribulation,  
By her ages of sin and of crime,  
By our prayers, by our vows, and prostration,  
By the memories and tears of our time,  
By our anguish and bitter repining,  
By our gaze on the future and thee,  
To our prayers and entreaties inclining,  
Issue forth from the slumbering sea.

We have wandered adown to thy river,  
From the graves and the tombs of the lands,  
We are willing to worship thee ever,  
By thy shores, by thy far spreading sands,  
And we kneel, in the silence half-broken  
By the sobs that our sorrows beget,  
We beseech thee, by vows all unspoken,  
To grant us the power to forget.



By the lips we have loved, by the aching  
     That followeth love in a day,  
 By the thirst, by the draught, by the slaking,  
     That speedily dieth away ;  
 By the lies we have lived, by the burning  
     Of kisses we shared in and met,  
 By the triumph that years have been earning,  
     We beseech Thee for power to forget.  
 Through the years that arise in their measure,  
     We would live for the day, nothing more ;  
 The past has no ingarnered pleasure,  
     For us in his poisonèd store :  
 When the cloud of thy night is descending,  
     We shall bless thee though memory be dead,  
 In that hour when our anguish is ending,  
     And our sins and our sorrows are shed.

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#### VINO DEL PRIORATO.

BETWEEN the purple light and glass,  
     The sun and shadows cast their sheen,  
 Upon the subtle rays that pass  
     The soft clear wine and lips between.  
 Sunlight and wine have reft their hues  
     On green-garbed plains and cloudless lands,  
 Where columned by unchanging blues,  
     The soft seas sweep the shiftless sands.  
 Glance through the purple globules, see  
     The Scala Dei autumn red  
 Upon the Priorato, we  
     Will rest and dream grape-garmented.

NOTE.—At the entrance of the fertile valley La Conca de Barberà, in the richest district of Catalonia, stand the ruins of the Cistercian Monastery, the Scala Dei. Where now there are nought but broken columns and time-worn plinths, surrounded as far as eye can see by prosperous vineyards and farms, an abbot formerly reigned in mitred pomp. By the oppression of the

poor, and the importunation of the rich, the monastery became the most wealthy in Spain. Stored in the many cellars were numberless casks of the deep red wine of the Priorato, gathered and garnered by the constant labour of those from whom the abbot drew his tithes. So magnificent was the reputation, and so splendid the surroundings of this abode of feudalism, that it was deemed worthy to be the Escorial, or burial-place, of the Kings of Arragon, and afterwards of the Dukes of Cardona. In a time of over-wrought tyranny and oppression, the people revolted, levelled the walls of the monastery to the ground, and left it a ruin in the midst of plenty.

Terrace on terrace, plain on plain,  
Toward the blue and breezeless skies,  
The ripe-grown pastures, grape and grain,  
In arch and crescent, bow and rise.

Drink of this ripe mist, molten, shed  
From brows and breasts by labour worn ;  
Drink to the doomed forgotten dead !  
Drink to the old world's labour-scorn !

On slopes where chesnut fronds bow down,  
To shade the green autumnal grass,  
Beneath the rocks where rose-rays crown  
The hovering hill and rainbowed pass ;

As yonder autumn-garbèd tree,  
That bends to mouth the amorous earth,  
I lean my lips, to lose in thee  
Memories and tears and timeless mirth.

Embound with leaves around thy brows,  
Green-garmented as Bacchanal,  
With longing lips, half stained with vows,  
And half where ripe fruits riven fall,

In light-flown purple flecklets, spilled  
Like dripping blood upon thy face,  
Bruisen within the core, and killed  
By over-measure of embrace.

Thy passioned limbs are weary, wed  
To quivering grass and blossomed turf,  
Like to thy mother born and shed  
Of waves of sea and creeping surf.  
Here now with mouths pain-parched and red,  
We crush this grape, and watch the cores  
Fall faintly, where the sun is sped  
Upon the drips of moistened pores.  
O love, between our laughing lips  
Die all things hoped, all things desired,  
And living love soon sleeps and slips  
Where other wishes have expired.  
O burning bosoms, lustful face,  
Guard me and garb me now with pain,  
Hold me the wine of thy embrace,  
Cling to me now and wake again!  
Blend with me, bear me, be as one  
With me, one wine deep-draughted, red  
As fire that flames the setting sun,  
As life in the uprisen dead.  
I would that all thy blood were wine,  
That I might drink and rise again,  
Filled with this waking fire of thine,  
Filled and grown fair with sudden pain.  
Mingle with me and lose in me  
Thy stricken face and snow-wed breast,  
One wine with me, in me, through thee,  
The birth and child of thy bequest.  
Drink, drink again; the fire that fell  
From heaven was wine, in every vein  
The ashes smoulder, glow, and swell,  
Out in this vine-land, here in Spain.  
Where wreathing vines, soft, snake-like crawl  
On hidden mounds and turf, to where  
Beside the Scala Dei walls,  
We breathe the burning incense air,



Look through the leaven light, where pass  
The prayerless friars, who of old  
By these low slopes of quivering grass,  
Gathered these draughts of slumbering gold.

Who, with their God as guerdon-name,  
Reaped in the toil of others' days,  
Found for these draughts a lustful fame,  
To pave the path of lustful ways.

Peace to the past : oppression dies  
On all her hands ; these broken walls,  
These moss-grown stones, alone may rise,  
Above the God of Heavens halls.

These men have been : and if there be  
One in this burning blue above,  
I pray his pity, seeing that we  
Have lingered long-time in this love.

I pray his pity, seeing that we  
Know not his God-star, and the night  
Hides us, and hovers where the sea  
Breaks on the sun-down and the light.

So that between the moon and mist  
We hope, and in the darkened day  
We have no help or time or tryst,  
No light to guide us on the way.

I ween were I day-dead, alone,  
Without the glinted gate of heaven,  
Before the tumult of the throne,  
Dying as now unhelped, unshriven.

With all thy golden heaps of hair  
Burning my breath, thy lips yet warm  
Upon my cheek, and all the air  
Close-killed with vow and broken charm ;

Were you beside me, bound as now  
With crisp and amorous vinery leaves,  
Around thy lips and fevered brow,  
Bound as the grain in harvest sheaves ;

Leaning for very love, the King,  
Great Jove would laugh. His furrowed face  
Would flush with passion, fevering  
His throat and hands with godly grace.

Ah, in this wind-worn autumn air,  
Where rose-ripe vineries bow and blow,  
Is there a flower or fruit as fair,  
As this soft love, this flame of snow?

Lean back thy golden, glorious face  
Here to the sun, so that I see  
Your heart grow hard in my embrace,  
So that I see through thee, in thee,  
The black-blood rushing through the heart  
Glow in thy veins, thy burning breast  
Ache with a tingling pulse and smart,  
Throb in thy throat where I caressed.

Ah! fire-fierce lips, ah, sunlit hair,  
How shall I hold you, so the light  
Cannot come between us? So the air  
Sing not between our sleepless sight?

Ah! love, would I were yonder vine,  
And you yon plane tree; limb by limb  
You were then bound to me and mine,  
As sun-light to the Seraphim.

Rise from thy scattered ivy, clad  
With autumn vine-leaves; rise and call  
The whole world's sorrow to be glad,  
To worship with the Bacchanal.

By plane and dale, by hill and rill,  
By foaming river and quivering seas,  
Let all the old-time passion fill  
The music of the Menades.

Nay, these have fled: no sound is shed  
On growing grass or ivy tree,  
Their cymbals now are hushed and dead,  
On Hebrus and on Rhodope.

And darkness dawns: good night, good grace,  
Sweet love, and all things fair that be,  
Till, with eyes waking on thy face,  
I lose myself again with thee.

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### THE COMING OF KING COAL.

THE autumn colours deepen into gloom,  
And cold winds moan, and it is time to light  
The first fire of the winter in my room,  
To warm the hearth and make the ceiling bright—  
King Coal I welcome you this rainy night.  
Be kind to me, as you have ever been,  
And do not chide because in sunny times  
I quite forgot you under hedges green,  
A-listening to the jocund summer chimes,  
In dreams of sweet new love and sweet old rhymes.  
Believe me, my dear friend, a book in June  
Has given greater joy than well-earned gold,  
And I have been the better for the tune;  
But dearer are the stories you have told  
When frosty wind has whistled on the wold.  
Give me a sign: yes, now I see the flames  
In curling colours glow, and rise, and blend;  
Upon the embers are familiar names—  
Familiar faces in the smoke ascend;  
And now I know that you are still my friend.  
I sit before you with a pleasant fear,  
To see remembered pictures of dead days,  
To watch myself walk through the dying year,  
To meet my friends and foes by many ways,  
And do my part in still unfinished plays.  
Tell me, King Coal, what have I done this year?  
How will it bear upon the years unborn?  
Are merry hours, or greater troubles near?  
Now, what is here? Yes, it is summer morn,  
And I am with a girl between the corn.



Now we are walking in a wide field, full  
Of buttercups a-ringing yellow bells;  
I run into the rich tall grass to pull  
A blue flow'r that a lover's message tells,  
And have not any thought of fare-thee-wells.

We sit down on the green and talk together  
Of this and that: I do not doubt that we  
Shall have a life of love and sunny weather;  
So do I dream in my simplicity,  
And build a castle of felicity.

No more, King Coal, unless you change the scene;  
I will not look again; no more, I pray:  
Suffice it that I know what love has been;  
Yet will I seek for comfort in life's way,  
Though I find not a wife till my death day.

I wait for winter, and his wild, white nights,  
And I will spend them all King Coal with you;  
And my dull room shall then have fairy lights,  
Golden, and red, and gray, and white, and blue—  
But do not speak of things that being we rue.

GUY ROSLYN.

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AN OLDEN SONG.

AGES ago when the world was young,  
Ere sin had sullied its spotless page,  
The sons of God from their ruby lips flung  
Glorious songs as they wandered among  
The gardens of earth in its infantine age.

Morning and evening,  
Evening and morning,  
Sun in his setting  
Darkness begetting,  
Queenly moon sailing,  
Truant stars hailing,  
Creeping and peeping,  
Nightly watch keeping;

Sun in his dawning,  
 Scorching and scorning  
 Night as he falters,  
 Building cloud altars  
 Crimson and golden,  
 Azure enfolden,  
 Shapen and moulden

Jehovah to thee.

Evening and morning,  
 Morning and evening,  
 River and ocean  
 Pant with emotion,  
 Ocean and river  
 Shiver and quiver  
 In their abysses,  
 Faint with the kisses

And breath of the breeze:

Kissing and clinging,  
 Show'rs of spray flinging,  
 Which the flow'rs springing

Open mouthed seize.

Morning and evening,  
 Evening and morning,  
 God, who created,  
 Fashioned, and fated  
 Worlds which are hoary,  
 Circled in glory,  
 Smiles on the creatures  
 In form and in features

Likest His Son:

In His heart holds them,  
 'Neath his wings folds them,  
 Love and light lending  
 Till in the ending,  
 Mingling and blending,

They shall be one.

DERMOT HEATH.

## TO SOUND.

SPEAK FORTH ! what art thou, strange and secret sound ?  
Where e'er I go thy wondrous voice I hear ;  
O'er city, country, dell, and sunny mere  
Thou reign'st unseen—with hidden power crown'd.  
In thy soft whispering is the forest drowned,  
And rustling leaflets soothe my list'ning ear ;  
The gale awakes thee in the twilight drear,  
And echo answers from his unfixed bound.  
Awful thy accents in the midst of storms ;  
Fearful thy presence when the angry sea,  
Seething and leaping in a thousand forms,  
On the grey crags resounds eternally.  
Thy daughter music oft my heart's blood warms ;  
But in a maiden's mouth thou charmest me.

MALCOLM SALAMAN.

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A STORM AT SEA.

WHO gazes on the rolling deep without a thought of wonder ?  
Whose waves are calm as childhood's sleep or rousing mock the  
thunder.

How bright its sparkling splendour in the golden light of noon,  
How beautiful its soft repose beneath the glittering moon ;  
But when the angry hurricane is speeding on his path,  
And the billows of the ocean arise in answering wrath,  
When o'er the dim horizon there is no sound nor sight,  
Save the fury of the tempest and the breakers rolling white,  
Spurning all human power, scorning the arts of men,  
Then is its grandest hour, say what can equal then?—  
Though rolling where fair cities lay, sweeping o'er countless  
graves—

The glory of its dashing spray, the thunder of its waves !

Woe for the fisher's family ! With eager, watchful eyes  
They see the dark clouds gather, the angry billows rise ;  
And through night's solemn hours their lonely vigil keep,  
While the husband and the father is tossing on the deep.



And as the casements rattle while the loud wind hurries past,  
 They seem to hear his cry for help, borne on the moaning blast.  
 Perchance even now he sleepeth beneath some rolling surge,  
 The ocean weeds his pillow, the seagull's cry his dirge :  
 Unconscious, as the wild waves play about his helpless form,  
 Of the anguish of the loving hearts that listen to the storm.

While far from human dwelling on the tempest driven seas  
 The tall ships rock and quiver like reeds before the breeze.  
 Upon those raging billows, before that boisterous gale,  
 Well might the wisest falter, well might the bravest quail.  
 In vain stout head and cunning hand are testing all their skill,  
 For the spirit of the hurricane shall be the conqueror still.  
 His forces close around them in ever lengthening ranks,  
 And crush the good ship's bulwarks and tear her oaken planks.  
 Ay ! yield them up your treasures, fling gold and gems away,  
 But those resistless surges shall have a nobler prey !

And, gazing on their tumult, the watcher's thoughts are filled  
 With Him before whose awful voice the winds and waves are  
                   stilled ;

Who boundeth those tremendous waves with barriers of sand,  
 Who holdeth the proud ocean in the hollow of His hand.  
 Loudly our domes and palaces proclaim man's power and skill,  
 But those resounding surges attest a mightier will.  
 Amid earth's jarring voices our better thoughts grow dim,  
 But still the great sea speaketh in solemn tones of Him  
 Who curbs its rolling waters, who guides its wayward breeze,  
 Whose voice is in the tempest, whose glory on the seas !

F. YOUNG.

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### THE GENIUS OF CHAUCER AND SPENSER.

As in mental science, the analysis of the individual mind leads the philosopher to conclude that only in virtue of difference and contrast can rational life be realized and developed, so in the universal mind of the race life and health may be said to be promoted in consequence of disagreement and opposition. But while this is true universally it holds especially true of poets, who, in the highest sense of the term, are the great pioneers of human progress ; for

they are not only widely separated from each other in the degree, but also in the kinds of merit. Of this, perhaps one of the best instances is afforded in the contrast between the genius of Chaucer and Spenser. While national poets, removed from each other by no lengthened interval of time, they yet present opposite poles of thought and imagination, and if we except the fact that they conformed in their peculiar ways to the laws of mental growth furnish in common few features of agreement. Chaucer dealt with the tangible ; Spenser with the airy ; the one trod the hard-beaten soil of earth ; the other, the enchanted ground of fairy land. In Chaucer's sketches, the actual and concrete are bodied forth, that the reader is placed in contact, as it were, with the living forms of nature ; in those of Spenser, on the other hand, the scenes are representative of beings we see but in some ethereal dream or horrible fantasy. By Chaucer, virtue and vice are painted naturally, with all the exactness of Euripides, minus his ill-timed moralizing ; by Spenser, on the other hand, vice is depicted not as it appears to the eye, ever in conjunction with some modifying or redeeming element, and virtue, not as it lives on earth interfused with the dross of human imperfections, but both are held up in their naked and unmixed simplicity.

Still, although this striking contrast of their respective modes of viewing and exhibiting life meets us at the threshold, it is not possible to refer this diversity to a substantial difference of aim. In an important sense, poetry is the same in all ages. The materials doubtless alter on which the poetic sense operates, and the mode of their association admits of endless combinations, but, virtually, the real may become the ideal and the ideal the real, the substance the shadow and the shadow the substance, as the human mind happens to be less or more fully developed. If, for instance, we turn our attention inward for a little, and, shutting out the gay panorama which the senses reveal, live in the calm stillness of reflection—what but a short time before were the omnipresent realities of a world hemming us in and conditioning our every step, fades away into the visionary, the fantastic, and the unreal. Absorbed alone in a spiritual contemplation, the possibilities of mind are found to be—a revelation indeed ! more potent and extensive than the capricious shapes which nature has realised ; so that, if he is to

answer the purpose of a full exponent of mental states, he must be idealized and made, thereby, a more flexible and complete instrument in portraying the drama of existence. While, then, we may discriminate between the relative positions of Chaucer and Spenser to the universe around them, and the contrast they present in their poetry, we cannot say that the one is more or less practical than the other, or that either has the advantage in point of truthfulness and sincerity. To the one truth is as much an object of attraction as to the other ; nor, when we take into account their respective standpoints, can we attribute to either a greater fidelity in the portraiture of the scenes present to the imagination and the heart. For each has transcribed and faithfully depicted the world in which he moved, and has embodied in striking characters those phases of thought and emotion which therein held sway.

Thus, no moral difference of aim can be argued in respect of Chaucer and Spenser. Doubtless, in the extreme narrowness and bigotry of the vulgar mind, truth is limited to the fugitive appearances that meet the eye, and the sounds that din the ear, while all meditative, religious, and philosophic speculations are branded fictitious and futile ; but not thus narrow, not thus merely sensible is truth. On the contrary, it is many and various, possessing as many forms and manifestations as there are ideas, not simply in the human but in the Divine mind. Hence in so far as truth is real, and that is expressed no less in the variety than in the intensity of our relations to nature, are we impelled in accordance with the laws of our constitution to seek after novelty and originality, assured that while the search after truth in these regions is not in vain it is also infinite and inexhaustible.

The difference, therefore, we conceive, between Chaucer and Spenser, on the score of practical worth, has not in general been fairly stated. It is not that Chaucer has taken up a practical, and Spenser an unpractical attitude towards their fellow men—since both have one aim in carrying out their respective modes of interrogating nature,—but rather their difference consists in furthering the discovery of truth by opposite courses, and possibly by adapting their treatment and plan to very dissimilar stages of mental development.

Again, to view these authors from another standpoint, it seems



to us that if we weigh carefully the popular theory—whereas in Chaucer predominates the love of truth, Spenser was most influenced by the love of beauty—we shall find that it is open to similar objections. In reality, the opposition between them is not an opposition of sentiment, but a necessary fruit of the greater or less scope they had for imaginative effort. Chaucer's sphere was amid the concrete and the sensuous ; his powers of fancy and feeling were circumscribed by the actual forms of nature ; and hence his imagination was not boundless, but trammelled by material conditions. On the other hand, Spenser's sphere was the spiritual domain, where imagination might revel at will, and depict what the mind was able to realise of perfection unhampered by any regard to its sensuous expression. If, then, we find in Spenser beauty spiritualized, beauty ennobled, and in Chaucer no such free exercise of the fancy, but a scrupulous adherence to facts, the question is not one of sentiment at all, but merely illustrates a two-fold process of discovering and representing the beautiful.

The fundamental distinction, indeed, between the genius of Chaucer and Spenser consists in this,—that whereas the former has taken up and portrayed life objectively, the latter has made everything subordinate to its subjective exhibition. And this broad distinction meets us on every page of their writings in a manner the most unqualified and thorough. With Chaucer sensible realities are sacred things. His descriptions of character and natural scenery are, on every occasion, as minute and scrupulously exact as if some tragic historical narrative were the theme, and honour and conscience were alike at stake in their trustworthy record. Hence the utmost deliberation and sedulous care appear in all his writings, as well as a corresponding discursiveness oftentimes mis-named prolixity. But in the true acceptation of the term Chaucer is rarely prolix. He describes at length, from no love of prolonged talk or vapid circumlocution, but that he might perfect his sketch by touches finer and more delicate still. Thus, his masterly introduction to the *Canterbury Tales* might well be compared to some finished statue of Phidias, or skilful design of Raphael ; for the soul—the consummate taste—of genius is there, and upon the page the characters appear as if mapped out on canvas or blocked in marble. The several personages of the tale, indeed, are

set before us in such natural and life-like guise that we can, as it were, behold for ourselves the soldierly frankness, gallantry, candour, and reserve of the Knight ; the refined, punctilious, and high-bred grace of the nun ; the sleek, plump, and jolly form of the monk ; and the bustling, officialism, and pedantry of the lawyer. But, perhaps, in no character more than in the student has Chaucer succeeded equally in casting around the picture the halo of ethereal dignity and repose. There the divine spirit of thought is depicted ; the soul that exhilarates in the calm sunlight of abstruse meditation, and awakens to the consciousness of another sun and other scenes but to reflect on the benighted spirits around him, the diviner light of his more radiant orb.

In Chaucer's descriptions of natural scenes there is the like display of conscientious exactness. Thus, in the poem "The Flower and the Leaf," stanza fifth, we have a picture of a pleasant grove, which, while concise, details the minutiae of contrast and resemblance :—

"In which were osses great streight as a line,  
Under the which the grass so fresh of hue  
Was newly sprung, and an eight foot or nine  
Every tree well fro his fellow grew  
With branches brode, laden with leves new  
That sprongen out ayen the greene-sheene,  
Some very red and some a lightest greene."

The peculiar feature of Chaucer's genius, then, cannot be more succinctly expressed than by the term naturalness. In his writings prolixity and terseness are merely accidents ; neither being habitually employed, nor from the nature of his position required. What, indeed, his attitude as a faithful copyist demanded was breadth conjoined with nicety of vision ; the arrangement of the general around the salient points, so that the fulness of detail might serve as a fitting background for the exhibition of the more prominent features. Hence, in virtue of Chaucer's extensive acquaintance with nature, and the correctness of his appreciation of facts, may be inferred a further characteristic of his genius—sensibility of expression. His nature was warm, genial, sociable ; not narrow nor egotistic, but responsive to every variety of life and manner. He

observed keenly because he felt keenly, and observed extensively because his sympathies were generous and diffusive : and, hence, while, like all great poets, he appealed directly to the catholic elements in human nature, his art was concealed by the better art which nature makes and his sentiments transmuted to the dramatic incidents of every-day life,

No feature of character is more suited to the formation of a great poet than geniality, in which, in all likelihood, an important element of Chaucer's and Shakespeare's greatness consists ; because, if as Shelley has remarked, " A poet has to apprehend the good subsisting first between existence and perception, and, secondly, between perception and expression," a genial nature is but another name for one peculiarly alive to the beauties and truths that through the media of the senses pour into the firmament of mind. Moreover, we may infer from the general characteristic of Chaucer's genius—naturalness—the nature and degree of his imagination. Unlike Spenser's, it is not spiritual nor meditative, but exists only in so far as imagination may be regarded as the natural expression of sentiment produced by the mutual interaction of outer and inner impression. Hence, his descriptions speak for themselves, and convey their own moral lessons, apart from any didactic applications. The ingenious, witty, and loquacious defence of the " Wif of Bathe," in the prologue to her tale, is at once the most picturesque representation and cutting censure of her frailties ; for while her irreverent humour and superficial acuteness are displayed, they are fittingly coupled with her shameless life and equally flimsy morality. In the same manner the dramatic character of Chaucer's imagination everywhere shows itself. To him the outward appearance is the exact prototype and symbol of the inward life ; and as he never fails to read the spirit in the bodily investiture, he never comes short of presenting both in one well blended and suggestive whole. In all this Chaucer may be said to be eminently a poet of the old school, contemplating spirit not first and purely, but in and through the tenement of the body, and as seen when dimmed by the grossness of the material medium. For this reason he is a poet creative and sympathetic, not abstract and analytic. He concerns himself with facts, not with principles, and asks what really is rather than what ought to be. So, too, in his represen-



tations we have more of the body than of the spirit, and more of the exhibition of the actual blending of quality and motive, than of the principles which govern them in action.

A striking difference, accordingly, between the genius of Chaucer and Spenser here comes into view, which may at the first glance seem rather paradoxical. It is that, in regard to the method at least of moralizing, Chaucer has most conformed to the province of poetry; for, whereas Spenser has oftentimes affected a moral aim, and in so far tended to make goodness a thing of dogma, Chaucer has never abstractly presented his own conceptions of right and wrong; but by addressing the feelings and sympathies of men has exercised his powers to make the love and service of morals habitual.

The objection, however, which applies in full force against the morality of Chaucer, and which cannot be brought against Spenser, is that the genius of the former with its characteristic fidelity to nature has not presented vice in her own horrible attire, but has to some extent glossed it over by employing pleas based on human passions and frailties. Of course this humanizing of vice will have no power on those sufficiently elevated in the divine likeness, and does not in its humanized forms receive a rational assent; nevertheless, though being allied with human emotion it exercises the strongest of all influences on those sensual enough to be drawn within the vortex.

But while all this is only the more vividly illustrative of Chaucer's intensely human and catholic sympathies, it explains the predominance of the comic over the tragic element of his genius, and the cause which has led certain writers to attribute to Chaucer a lack of moral earnestness and nobility of aim. With Chaucer the world was no vale of tears, nor was human prosperity counter-vailed by a more than compensating retribution. Sorrows, indeed, there were, and tales of woe, at the hearing of which his spirit bled, but such to him were the exception, not the rule. Among all ranks and conditions of men he beheld the genial diffusion of joy, and infinitely more to laugh and be merry over than to weep and lament. Hence, while Chaucer rarely rises to the tragic incidents of life, he is ever ready to seize upon its comic and humorous aspects. To depicture well, however, the tragic forces in the government of human life, though it requires the same kind

of genius as that displayed in good comedy, requires for the time being a certain severe and passionate disposition of mind. But this was what Chaucer was ill fitted to give, for his tastes and sympathies were cordial and unconstrained, and his earnestness, though intense and genuine, was yet calm and unruffled, like the smooth impetuous flow of some great river. Hence the profoundly tragic feelings excited by the dire power of some ill omened destiny, and the mortal struggles called forth by internal weakness or malicious foes, Chaucer could not describe because he could not realise. His muse breathed only of the noonday freshness, health, and liberty, and knew not of the night's grim cares and gloom, when the sun has sunk to rest, and the spirit of man is enveloped in cloud and darkness.

J. DOUGLAS.

(*To be Continued*).

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IANTHE.

BY LEONARD LLOYD.

SCENE II.—*A garden of roses—Evening—IANTHE (alone).*

ROSES red, and white, and yellow,  
 Each one fairer than its fellow,  
 Some half-blown and some more mellow—  
     Budding beauties day by day,  
     Which is fairest who can say?  
 Roses of all sorts and sizes  
 This my garden ground comprises;  
 Rich in colours, fair in form,  
 Suitor bees enamoured swarm.—  
     Beauties ripening day by day,  
     Which is sweetest who can say?  
 But a tiny tree is growing  
 By the gate, on which is blowing  
     One small rose with petals white,  
     Which my love praised yesternight,  
     And to me 'tis fairer far  
     Than the other roses are.





To deep despair. Ianthe ! mine, my own,  
 For ever mine ! Oh love ! if joy could kill  
 Then should I fall now dying at your feet.  
 But those sweet words, which hourly I have hoped  
 And hungered for, were winged with subtle life,  
 A nobler, fuller life than they can feel  
 Who know not what it is to be beloved.  
 Lay your head here, upon my breast again,  
 And tell me that you love me just once more !

IANTHE. I love you, Cuthbert, dearly, more than life.

CUTHBERT. More than your life, Ianthe, more than life ?

You are *my* life, my darling ! and this heart,  
 The moment that you died, would cease to beat :  
 But we will live long years ! yes we will live  
 And love ! Ah ! would that this were heaven,  
 So cruel Death could never come, nor aught  
 To separate an instant ! would that we,  
 Folded in one anothers' arms as now,  
 Might live eternally.

IANTHE.

How strange is life !

I do not think we really live until  
 We learn to love some being better far  
 Than we have loved ourselves : it is not life,  
 The selfish and unsatisfying round  
 Of so called pleasures, that some seem to think  
 The height of human happiness : for this,  
 This love which came unbidden to my breast,  
 Has made me a new being, changed my thoughts,  
 My words, my actions ; everything is changed ;  
 Even the world seems fairer, and the sun  
 Sheds a more radiant light ; yon surging sea,  
 Which used to make me sad before you came,  
 Sounds now like sweetest music in mine ears ;  
 The birds have merry notes ; each tiny flower  
 Seems smiling with a new-found joy ; the trees  
 Laugh as I pass beneath them ; every breeze

Whispers your name ; and even when I sleep  
 In dreams I see you still and hear you speak.  
 But, Cuthbert, there is one thing I would know—  
 Am I your first and only love ? has earth,  
 Or even heaven another maid who claims  
 To share with me your heart ?

CUTHBERT.

Ianthe dear !

My love for you exceeds all other love  
 (As the great sun a tiny glow-worm's light)  
 Making them seem as nothing. Can the bee  
 Leave sipping honey from a fragrant rose  
 To linger on the thistle ? can a saint  
 Leave Paradise to pine upon the earth ?  
 You are my rose, and you my Paradise !  
 I have no love but you ; I never had,  
 And never can have, since that I have known  
 What 'tis to love the fairest and the best  
 Of womankind. I am entirely yours !  
 My heart and my whole being are your own :  
 In sorrow or in joy, in life or death,  
 In earth or heaven yours only : and no power  
 Can make me love you less, or make me look  
 With love upon another. 'Tis the fate  
 Of every being born into this world,  
 If that he live to manhood, thus to love  
 With his soul's strength, to lavish all his wealth,  
 The capability that each one hath  
 Of loving, on another, it may be  
 On one who will not, cannot make return ;  
 Yet 'tis no matter, for the cold contempt,  
 The scorn, the hatred of the one beloved,  
 Will never make his heart the least disloyal.  
 And though in future years he may bow down  
 Before the shrines of others fairer far,  
 And render them lip homage, still his thoughts  
 Will linger round his life love, for she seems  
 To dwell within a splendid temple, reared

Amid the ruins of the shattered shrines  
 Of other deities. When God first breathed  
 The breath of life into the man he made  
 Out of the dust, with that life-breath there rushed  
 Into man's heart the river of pure love,  
 And ever since it hath been springing up  
 Unquenchably. It is in vain we try  
 To check its onward course—you might as well  
 Place barriers to prevent the Alpine snows  
 From melting 'neath the sun, and pouring down  
 In torrents to the valleys ; or to stem  
 The daily tides of ocean, as to say  
 To any heart, although it be your own,—  
 "Thou shalt not love poor heart !" for love and life  
 (The never dying life of every soul)  
 Are woven fast together, so it forms  
 The great necessity of all God-made  
 To live and love for ever.

IANTHE.

I have thought

Often, when you and I are happy thus,  
 Happy in one anothers' love, that earth,  
 And even heaven, were made for us alone ;  
 And yet there must be thousands gazing now  
 Upon God's stars, and thinking as we think,  
 Feeling as we now feel. Before you came  
 I often used to wander here at eve  
 And talk to the sweet flowers. I had a name  
 For every tiny tree, and used to grieve  
 Over each rose which faded ; and I thought  
 That with my flowers, and the still stars, and God,  
 I was as blessed as I could be on earth :  
 But now I know, the purest, noblest joy  
 Which God can give to man, I wonder oft  
 That I could ever live without your love.  
 And, Cuthbert, you have seen the busy world,  
 And lived in the great cities,—have you known  
 Any two beings blest as we are now,  
 With not a fear beyond ?



CUTHBERT.

I had a friend

Long years ago, who had a fair young love,  
Much like to you, Ianthe—azure eyes,  
Large dreamy eyes, a wealth of flaxen hair,  
A low sweet voice, a sunny smile, a heart  
Brimful of truth and tenderness—and he  
Was never tired of speaking of his love,  
Was never happy save when she was near,  
And then her presence made the earth a heaven,  
As yours does now for me.

IANTHE.

And have you seen

This beauty, Cuthbert? or did he, your friend,  
Describe her charms to you?

CUTHBERT.

Oh! I have seen.

The maiden many times! but it is long,  
Yes, very long ago; at least it seems  
A weary time to me, for since I lost  
That faithful friend, until I found you, dear,  
I have been very lonely.

IANTHE.

Did she die?

Or was she false to him? or are they still  
Happy together?

CUTHBERT.

Yes, she died: and I

Stood by her couch after the spirit fled,  
And looked upon her face. She was so fair,  
With such a conscious smile upon her lips,  
So wonderfully beautiful, I said  
It was impossible she could be dead!  
That she would shortly wake and laugh at us  
For our false fears.

IANTHE.

And did your friend die too?

For I have read that lovers often die  
Of broken hearts for those they lose, as I  
Should for your sake.

CUTHBERT.

Oh, no ! he did not die—

He could not, though he prayed with burning tears  
That God would send sweet death to him ! for days,  
Kneeling beside her couch, he called on her  
And God, alternately ; he kissed her hands,  
Her brow, her lips, he stroked her long fair locks  
Caressingly, as he was wont to do,  
And would not leave her till they came by force  
To drag him thence : then he went mad awhile,  
And cursed the God to whom he prayed, and swore  
To sell himself body and soul for nought,  
To sell himself to hell ; but he was mad,  
And knew not what he said.

IANTHE.

And have you seen

Your poor friend lately ? Did he love again ?  
Surely he could not ? for such hearts as his  
Are ever constant.

CUTHBERT.

After Mabel died

I lost all comfort in his company,  
For he was always sad ; yet I have heard  
But lately he has found another maid  
Whom he has learnt to love, though, maybe, not  
With the same depth of passion. It is strange  
That he should love again : but there are hearts  
Which, while they beat, must love, and his is such.

IANTHE.

And are most hearts inconstant ? is it rare

To meet with deathless loyalty ? I thought  
That true love was as pure as angels are,  
As perfect as their pleasant Paradise,  
And as eternal as the throne of Him  
They worship constantly. Yet, now I think,  
I oft have heard my mother say, and sigh  
As she has said, that woman's heart beats true  
Till death, but that a man's will change  
With every fickle fancy ; like the sea,  
Which at the dawning, maddened by desire

To clasp the maiden earth, and make its own  
 That which has never known a wavelet's kiss,  
 Panting with passion, springs toward its prey,  
 Calling aloud on heaven; and though 'tis foiled  
 A thousand times will only gnash its teeth,  
 And pausing for a moment as for breath,  
 Dash wildly on again;—yet, ere the sun  
 Seeketh his western chamber, this same sea  
 Will listless lie in sight of her he loves,  
 And sing himself to sleep.

CUTHBERT.

Yet surely, dear,

You think not thus of me? 'twere easier far  
 To quench the sun, and put out all the light  
 Of yonder stars, than to make this my love  
 Languish an instant! for the hand of time,  
 That cruel, crushing hand, which constantly  
 Changes all earthly things, the faith of friends,  
 The frowns of foes, the hatred of hard hearts,  
 The beauty of the beautiful, the youth  
 And hope of early manhood, the despair  
 Of the despised; that turns our soaring songs  
 To sadness, sadness back again to song,  
 Makes mirth mere madness, bitter waters sweet,  
 And sweet most bitter; makes a mighty mind  
 With wise words, strung in song or flung like fire  
 In hearing of the million wrong with wrongs,  
 Trample on error, grinding to the dust  
 The lies that wrought oppression, till the time  
 When truth shall triumph, and glad breezes float  
 The banner of pure love and brotherhood  
 'Tween earth and heaven. Time, that will steal the stars  
 From the fair firmament, and war with worlds,  
 Whirling them through infinitude of space,  
 Till they shall crumble piecemeal, and become  
 The nothing that they were. Time, at whose touch  
 Things fairest fade and fall into decay,  
 Can never lessen love like mine which lies



Hid in mine inmost being, forming part  
Of that which is for aye immutable,  
The secret soul, the incorruptible,  
Immortal as its Maker.

IANTHE.

Ah ! I knew

My mother must be wrong ! and had she lived  
To see you, Cuthbert, she would never say  
That men are ever false,

CUTHBERT.

Besides, I fear

All women are not true ; for I have known  
Many to break their plighted troth, and some  
Their marriage vows. I knew one once  
Who wrecked a noble life, and made a heart  
That used to be all love and gentleness,  
And reverence for women, harsh and cold,  
And loveless as her own.

IANTHE.

Alas ! your words

Have slain the truant wishes that I had  
To see the world which is called wonderful,  
The world of toil and pleasure. Dwelling here  
Amid the mountains, far from the vast crowds  
Which live and die in cities, I had thought  
Only of happiness ; and now I know  
So much of sin and sorrow lurking there,  
Even among the good and beautiful,  
Dame Fortune's favourites, and the great, whom fame  
Flatters and fawns upon, why it were best,  
Methinks, that we should leave the poor mad world  
To its own pleasures, and, contented here  
With one another, each a world to each,  
Live in a heaven of love and happiness,  
Unclouded and complete.

CUTHBERT.

The world to you

Is an unopened book, while I have learnt  
Whole chapters off by heart, and wearied of't  
As school-boys of hard tasks. At first, the words

Were golden lettered, cunningly devised  
 To ravish wanton eye and ear of youth—  
 Pages of pleasant wording, perilous  
 To every pure and noble sentiment  
 That lurks in human breasts—luring to lap  
 The eager earth-born senses lavishly  
 In sensuous delights, and dalliance  
 Of things unholy. Then there came a time  
 When the bright burnished gold, that I had loved  
 To linger on, grew dim with using, so  
 Beneath the gilt (for after all I found  
 It was but gilding) cruel maxims, harsh  
 And world-wise, mocked at me, until heart-sick  
 I closed the book, and turning with a laugh  
 I left the world to wither !

IANTHE.

That is why

You sought these solitudes ?

CUTHBERT.

Yes, that is why,—

And here I rest contented.

IANTHE.

How the clouds,

The earth-born clouds, have shut us from God's stars !  
 As sin shuts out from heaven.

CUTHBERT.

There is a storm

Swift gathering o'er our heads ! and even now  
 I hear the heart beats of the hungry sea  
 Impatient for his prey. Let us go in !  
 And you shall sing to me.

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## EARTH AND SEA.

SEA.

OH Earth ! unloving love of mine,  
 I cast my riches down before thee ;  
 My coral, red as rosy wine,  
 My pearls, my jewels, all are for thee.

I throw myself upon thy breast,  
Thy hard, cold breast for ever keeping  
Its love enthralled; yet nought of rest  
Thou vouchest my eternal weeping.

## EARTH.

Oh mournful Sea! Thy love, thy tears,  
And thy caressing fond embraces  
I dare not answer, for my fears  
That thou art changeful as thy face is.  
I see thee smiling at the breeze;  
I mark thee at the tempest frowning;  
And, whilst thou prayest at my knees,  
Thou mockest at my children drowning.

## SEA.

And thou! thou cold one: dost thou jest  
At me? The flowers I lately gave thee  
Are withered on thy careless breast,  
But just above the waves that lave thee.  
The love that seeks thee day and night  
Is hopeless, seeing thee so scornful:  
My hapless doom, my slain delight,  
What wonder that they make me mournful!

## EARTH.

The fitful anguish of thy wail  
Will die away before the morning:  
The strength of passion's storm will fail,  
And thou wilt laugh at all my scorning.  
The worthless flowers thou gavest me  
Have many times before been lying  
Upon my breast; but, faithless Sea,  
Thou hast not left them time for dying.

W. LAIRD-CLOWES.



## BY THE WHARFE.

## I.

How bright the aspect of these old green lanes  
Down which our feet have softly, slowly trod!  
The broad-set hedges sigh, and dream, and nod  
Moved by the wind that steals along the plains.  
Their thorny thickets here and there but seem  
Cool grots where one may find the rest, long sought,  
Could make all sweet the play of ling'ring thought,  
And give concordant pulse to passion's dream.  
What varied growths to life these thickets call!  
What bird-notes many-toned make music there,  
To charm the mind from its low-thoughted care,  
And link it to wide inspiration's thrall;  
Which round these hours some beauteous power may twine  
And "make life holier in its grand decline."

## II.

Here sit we by the brawling Wharfe's clear stream,  
At leisure loitering 'mong scenes most fair,  
And drinking draughts of fresh, inspiring air.  
Around us pictures that the poet's dream,  
Or finest skill of painter's hand surpass,  
The eye looks on long miles of meadow grass,  
Well wooded hills, a rich and fertile vale,  
Whose charms give glimpses of the Eden plan  
E'er beauty soil'd became, or sin began,  
And blurred the grand old Paradisal tale.  
How pure are all things here! How fresh and sweet  
These winding paths which tempt our wandering feet!  
What grateful incense all we see imparts  
To fill with love and reverence our hearts!

G. PERKIN.

## MEMORY.

THE hoar-frost weaves around the wither'd leaf  
 Her magic tracery with silver thread,  
 All fair above, all shrivell'd up beneath,  
 Grafting the beautiful upon the dead.  
 So memory o'er our waning life would shed  
 The joys of youth, the light of days gone by,  
 Ghosts of the past, the substance wholly fled,  
 By fancy raised, and cherish'd with a sigh!  
 The sun-beam melts the one—the other, stern reality!

A. E. G.

## SONG.

ONLY a light sweet song  
 Heard on a summer night;  
 Long ago, when my heart was strong,  
 And filled with a strange delight;  
 And the glad notes floated afar,  
 Up-borne by the listening breeze,  
 To the heaven of sun and star,  
 And away through the murmuring trees.  
 I lost the song; and I sold  
 The singer who sang to me,  
 But not for guerdon of gold,  
 Nor fame, nor liberty;  
 But because my sin was great  
 In the sight of man and of God,  
 And the feet of a terrible fate  
 Were swift in my path as I trod.  
 Once more comes the lingering strain,  
 Low, sweet as the song of a bird;  
 Piercing through heart and brain,  
 And making me weak with a word.

Ah sweet! if I loved you then,  
 If I dreamed in the by-gone days,  
 —The dream shall come not again—  
 But I pray, as a strong man prays,  
 That time, as it sweeps along,  
 May give you a better part;  
 And banish the sound of that song  
 From the depths of your woman's heart.

WERTHER

### AMONG THE SHADOWS.

Is it so hard to die? Is earth so sweet  
 Beneath our feet,  
 That with a sound of wailing and of weeping  
 We greet an endless sleeping?  
 We are as shadows, clasping shadowy hands;  
 Afar off stands  
 The light; and we in misery are roaming  
 Awhile amid the gloaming.  
 We are as chaff, threshed by the high god's flail;  
 As mist we fail;  
 Like dust by their light breath our souls are scattered;  
 Like broken roses shattered.  
 The glory of the sunlight and the spring;  
 The murmuring  
 Of birds and bees in daisy-gilded meadows;  
 These too are only shadows.  
 The flame that shrivels all things in its heat,  
 The throb, the beat  
 Of heart to heart; like some poor glimmering taper,  
 Flicker, and pass—a vapour.  
 The strong blood coursing in the young man's veins  
 That half sustains  
 The anguish of the night, the unstilled yearning  
 That in his heart is burning;



The brave hope, flinging scorn upon the world;  
The true lips curled  
In mockery of all its hollow seeming;—  
These pass—we are but dreaming.

A vision of the past; of vanished years  
Fulfilled with tears,  
Black with its memories of dust and ashes,  
Lit by no holy flashes.

A vision of the present; night and day  
Treading the way  
Thorn-strewn, with heaven above us black and clouded;  
Each step in gloom enshrouded.

A vision of the future;—hour by hour  
More darkly lower  
The skies; and only gleams of lurid lightning  
The path of life are brightening.

Rest, give us rest! Close now our weary eyes;  
No tears and sighs  
Shall hail death's coming when my sands are fleeting;  
I shall give happier greeting.

Come, with head crowned, and full of quiet peace;  
Let mourning cease;  
Come, with a footstep joyful as a lover;  
The night of grief is over.

Come, I would clasp unscared the cold hard hand  
That breaks the band  
Of life; and kiss again the fleshless fingers;  
Too long my spirit lingers.

Let me begone; this earth is dark and drear;  
Rest lives not here,  
O loved ones, make no sound of grievous weeping!  
I shall have quiet sleeping.

WERTHER.

## PEARLS.

ONCE, so runs the Eastern story,  
 Houris left their home of glory,  
 In the golden land of fable,  
     In the garden of the sun ;  
 And they donned their robes of sable  
                                 Black as night.

Swift as shadows of the noon-day,  
 Or the quiverings of the moon-ray,  
 Forth they passed the orient portals  
     Of the garden of the sun ;  
 And they went to gaze on mortals  
                                 Of the earth.

In their flight through aerial regions  
 They beheld the world's great legions  
 Striving each with each for empire ;  
     Fierce, and stern, and cruel they :  
 Man with brother, son with sire  
                                 In the fight.

And the scenes of foul oppression,  
 Cruelty and rank transgression,  
 They beheld as erst they tarried  
     Wrapt in their robes of sable,  
 Caused pitying tears ; which carried  
                                 By the winds

Out to sea, in their descending  
 With the ocean waves were blending ;  
 When the molluscs of the sea caves,  
     For the beauty they possessed,  
 Snatched them from the briny sea waves  
                                 With their shells.

Ages passed, and empires crumbled,  
 The oppressor's pride was humbled ;  
 Yet those tears ne'er lost the lustre  
     They possessed when first they fell.  
 Now they form a glorious cluster

Wreath of pearls

T. H. NORTH.

## MON PREMIER AMOUR.

HER hair was the colour of gold,  
Her face was the fairest I'd seen,  
She was only thirteen years old,  
And I was scarcely sixteen.  
I loved her, and love made me bold,  
I kissed her and called her my queen.

I met her one night at a dance,—  
Mr. Lightfoot's in Paddington Green,—  
Four years she'd been at school in France.  
And was lovely and sweet seventeen.  
She *cut* me dead with an unfeeling glance,  
When I playfully called her my queen.

Time has stolen her golden hair,  
She begins to grow old, I ween,  
Her beauty, I fancy too, seems to impair,  
And wrinkles are easily seen.  
But it's nothing to me that she is not fair,  
Now she's somebody else's queen.

EDWARD A. MORTON.

## SONG.

Lo, the white moon sitteth queenly  
In her star-tent's dusky hold!  
Oh, sing slowly, sing serenely  
To her sitting in the cold,  
Cold, so cold!  
Veiled in silence, silver-souled.

Soft! Her face is pale with dreaming,  
Dreams far-strayed from slumbers fold,  
Ages hath she watched their gleaming  
Beautiful!—for she is old,  
Old, most old!  
Veiled in visions, silver-souled.



When the dying primrose danceth  
 O'er her grave in chilly mould,  
 With a white brow down she glanceth,  
 Watching autumn toss and fold  
     His last gold,  
 Veiled in lustre, silver-souled.  
 Oh, sing slowly, her far brightness!  
 For when dawn steams up the wold  
 In a mantle of clear whiteness  
 All her splendours manifold  
     She will fold,  
 Veiled in azure, shining-souled.

H. G. S.

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 IN MEMORY

OF THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF A MOTHER'S DEATH.

ONLY six years ago to-day!  
 Alas! how soon the time hath fled;  
 Since mother's spirit passed away,  
 And left me with the silent dead.  
 'Twas she who taught my infant voice  
 To lisp a lowly Saviour's name;  
 And in his love and power rejoice,  
 His life to follow and proclaim.  
 Never again shall I hear her play  
 Her sweet guitar at eventide;  
 She sleeps beneath the cold dark clay,  
 Where willows weep and violets hide.  
 Never more shall I hear her sing  
 The favourite songs of bygone days;  
 Or in the church her sweet voice ring  
 With holy psalms and hymns of praise.  
 Her spirit sings in bliss on high,  
 Where sin and pain are known no more;  
 Amid the ransomed in the sky  
 She joins the choir on heaven's bright shore.

*May 4th, 1876.*

FRED. HUME.

## A HYMN OF LIFE.

I stood in the busy highway and watched the crowds go by,  
Onward, and always onward, like clouds in the evening sky:  
And I thought will it ever happen, that one in that passing  
throng

Will stay for awhile to listen to the rhyme of a poet's song?  
May it be that some gentle spirit will pause for an instant's  
space

To catch one inspiration from a glance at the poet's face?

So ever the long procession—

Cold lip and impassive eye—

In endless and endless marchings,

Goes carelessly silent by!

I stood on the shore, at noonday, of a sunny and smiling sea,  
And watched the white crested wavelets, rolling incessantly,  
And I thought, here's an image of action, a picture of life's  
emotion,

How youth and age go for ever on, like the waves of the rest-  
less ocean;

And the sunbeams flashing and flooding the sea with a golden  
glory,

Are akin to the hopes, and the joys, and woes that sanctify  
life's story.

So ever the long procession—

Cold lip and impassive eye—

In endless and endless marchings,

Goes carelessly silent by!

And thus as I stood there musing, a whisper came to my  
heart,—

Each man and woman, and little child, has to act in the world  
a part,

And if only the part be worthy, no matter the man's estate,  
The woman's love, or the child's belief—to be good's to be  
truly great—

For if there be clouds, there's sunshine; if tears, yet smiles  
and passion;

If sorrow there's consolation, *that* never goes out of fashion.

So ever life's long procession,  
 Goes forward day by day,  
 Some pressing on with joyful heart,  
 Some falling by the way;—  
 But for each there's a blessing waiting,  
 For all a glorious goal,  
 To reach in joy or to win by faith,  
 A rest for the chastened soul.

CAPTAIN CRAWLEY.

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### CASTLES IN THE AIR

DREAMING little Katie? dreaming—and of what?  
 In your castle-building is your love forgot?  
 Dreaming Katie darling of your future lot?  
 Dreaming of love's glamour in this grassy glade?  
 Dreaming of the sunshine sheltered in the shade?  
 Dreaming of your wifhood, simple little maid?  
 In your fairy castle have you rooms for grief?  
 Know you that as sunbeams human joys are brief?  
 Pleasures come to bless us—then comes Time, the thief.  
 Should the sorrows strengthen know you how to bear?  
 Have you hope to help you? have you heart to dare?  
 In your castle-chambers is there place for prayer?  
 Listen little Katie! from this sin and strife,  
 I am strong to shelter—could I call you wife,  
 I would guard your castle for you with my life.  
 I would fight your battles as the knights of old  
 Fought for truth and honour, not for paltry gold;  
 Circle you from danger in my strong arms fold.  
 Did you guess I loved you? Have you known long since?  
 Answer quickly darling, and my fears convince—  
 Will you have *me*, Katie, for the Castle's prince?  
 So I spoke, and shyly for my answer came  
 Clinging arms about me and a whispered name,  
 With a fair face hiding on my breast its shame.

ALGERNON RIVERS.



WINDSOR CASTLE.—*See* FRONTISPIECE.

STAND proudly in the golden light, thou peerless home of kings!  
Each room within thy massive walls with grand old glory rings;  
Centuries of glowing summer suns have crowned thy hoary head,  
And balmy breezes wake in thee the voices of the dead.

The sacred soil of England bears upon her glorious breast  
Hundreds of hallowed stately halls where noble hearts find rest;  
Her happy laughing hills are decked with towers grey with time  
But all acknowledge as supreme, thy holy regal shrine.

Deep in thy breast sad secrets lie unknown to history's page,  
Of wicked wooers, broken vows, and monarch's ruthless rage;  
But many in thy sheltering shade have wakened slumbering love,  
And kiss of Kings and Princes proved as true as heaven above.

Long have thy turrets listened to the soft and silvery strains,  
Sung by the flashing flowing stream fed by the falling rains;  
While through long wintry watches, guarding well our Royal race,  
Fair Cynthia with her lily lips has kissed thy cold calm face.  
Well thou rememberest loving words which made thy great  
heart beat,

While angels from the living God waited with silent feet;  
Within thy strong and faithful arms were dear ones going home  
To see the King of Kings above, and with lost loved ones roam.

Among the many mighty heads bowed low upon thy breast,  
Our noble uncrowned Albert was the wisest and the best;  
We all then lost a Father, and the world a faithful friend,  
While she who lived upon his love will weep until the end.

Heaven help the weeping widow, for she was wounded deep,  
And send her the strong Comforter who did with Mary weep;  
We love her for her tender heart, and pure and peaceful throne  
And bless her or her mother's care when left so sad alone.

God grant her long to live and reign, deep in each Briton's breast,  
And when her head is bowed with age, take her to His own rest;  
Where she shall see her long lost love, and with him sweetly sing  
With millions from her own fair land, near the great wounded  
King.

D. D.

## A QUAIN OLD PSALM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SO SINKS THE DAY-STAR."

THE wise—because more appealing to the mind—introduction of Hymns into our Church Services, even in the rigid Scottish Presbyterian Churches, has had the effect, which few, if any, can deplore, of, to a very great extent, curtailing the use of the singing of "the Psalms of David in metre ; according to the version approved by the Church of Scotland and appointed to be used in worship." Yet these good old psalms are still sung, and carry with them, in their ancientness of language and simplicity of tune accompaniment, the tone of the traditional primitiveness—but no less solemnly beautiful in that primitiveness—of the Presbyterian form of public worship. They are, of course, merely the psalms found in the Old Testament put into verse, and some of them, indeed many of them, are very grand and powerful, as also their companions the "Translations and Paraphrases" which, dealing with more varied and interesting subjects, possess finer and more modernly feeling language.

There is, however, one psalm, among a host of others, which reads most quaintly in its rare style of composition and far-fetched rhymes. This is the 119th—the longest psalm in the collection. It is one of David's common cries for help, based upon an avowal—for this thought runs repeatedly through the verses—that, though he strives and feels that he succeeds in keeping God's laws and observing His testimonies, yet the wicked are ever seeking after him, with efforts to convert him again to their modes of living, mentally and bodily, and, unless strength from above be repeatedly granted, the faith of the ancient song-writer stands a chance of being shaken. There is a ring of pride, and self-complacency pervading the general string of events, but always a corrective in a similar ring of humbleness and entreaty for strength ;—

"Upon thy statutes my delight  
Shall constantly be set ;"

is the key-note in his bearing and behaviour, but he is too human, therefore too weak, to stand alone—

“And, *by thy grace* I never will  
Thy holy word forget,”

Pondering over these laws brings great comfort to him—and David’s life is brimful of other and more worldly matters than this religious vein. He says, and note the rhyming—for, is there not an old spelling “sate?”—

“Against me princes spake with spite,  
While they in council *sat* ;  
But I, thy servant, did upon  
Thy statutes *meditate*.”

The language is very quaint—and, like the word “mouth” to which, we believe, there is no other word in the English language, to rhyme—and continually as it is used, “word” is the chosen rhyming sound to “Lord.” Then for another quaint rhyme ;—

“So shall I keep for evermore  
Thy law continually ;  
And, sith that I thy precepts seek,  
I’ll walk at liberty.”

and,

“In mine affliction”

runs parallel with

“By this thy word alone,”  
which might, at a stretch pass, if affliction be broken into syllables. Nor is the easy flowing of this very happy,

“Thy judgments righteous, O Lord,  
Which thou of old forth gave ;  
I did remember, and myself  
By them comforted have.”

Nor is,

“Their hearts through worldly ease and wealth,  
As fat as grease they be,”

a delicate simile ; but

“For like a bottle I’m become,  
That in the smoke is set ;  
I’m black and parched with grief, yet I”—

and here the old gleam of faith bursts in,

“Thy statutes not forget.”



The original prose version is more bold in one instance : it says, "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts ;" which is versified into

"In understanding I excel  
Those that are ancients ;  
For I endeavour to keep  
All thy commandments,"

which is a very halting verse, and makes out the Psalmist as only "endeavouring" to keep the laws which he, in his own version, distinctly gives us proof of his understanding—"because I keep thy precepts," with no endeavour or doubt at all.

But to hear old rhyming and quaint language, such as this, sung—and, for the most part, with no organ accompaniment—has a very weird effect, and is peculiarly striking : it harmonizes well, in its limited range of idea, with the narrow theological views which, too often, are denounced from the Scottish pulpit, and is, indeed, in tone with the bare, inanimate appearance of the interiors of the old Presbyterian churches. There is, however, the national and traditional reverential cadence about it which, though sounding quaint and cold to modern ears, possesses the vein of fervency and simplicity, one of the main, and much to be admired, points in the quietude of the Scottish form of worship—a form retaining the spirit of the old fathers who built it up.

J. KEITH ANGUS.

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### AN AUTUMN SONG.

A SONG for waning Summer, when her smile  
Is slowly fading on the landscape green,  
Whose dying glory sheds more light the while,  
Because more rarely seen.

She came all crown'd and diadem'd with light,  
And fairest flowers sprang up beneath her tread ;  
Her voice gush'd forth in song—and ear and sight  
Followed her where she led.

She ever scattered beauty where she passed,  
Her breath breathed odours sweet on hill and plain;  
And rolling billows of green cornfields, fast  
Ripened to golden grain.

Her joyous laughter 'mid the tangled brake,  
Sounding from waterfall and babbling brook,  
In happy strife—the echoes would awake  
In every silent nook.

The lark and nightingale in rival strains  
From swelling throats shook floods of carols rare,  
And swiftly skimming o'er the wooded plains  
Pour'd music on the air.

The mountains towering proudly to the sky,  
On every side did purple robes unfold  
Of tufted heather, braided gorgeously  
With the wild gorse-flower's gold.

Thus bloomed fair Summer in her brilliant noon,  
But richer yet her slow declining day;  
She leaves a glory with her waning moon  
Of exquisite decay!

Her wayward fancy paints the dim beech-woods:  
Green, gold, and crimson; and the mid-day sun  
Streams o'er their varied tints in amber floods,  
Blending all shades in one.

We climb through tangled heaps of fern and grass  
To reach the height of some dim, bosky rise;  
And bramble-berries crowding as we pass,  
In clusters tempt our eyes.

And after toiling up the wooded steep,  
And loitering in the shade amid the moss,  
We reach the top, and in the silence deep  
Stoop o'er the shelving fosse.

But time creeps on, as we sit watching here  
To a slow music of sad dropping leaves;  
Dreaming "Alas! cold winter time is near,"  
And the thought hardly grieves.

Each season has its glories—Spring and Fall,  
 And the dark days when freezes Summer's breath;  
 And *Life* has seasons, and we pass through *all*,  
 And the last change is Death.

HELEN MONRO.

### A RAIN CLOUD.

It loomed up heavily above the trees:  
 And fancy, who for ever loves to thread  
 Strange fantasies, her own sweet heart to please,  
 Called it—Old Neptune's mantle darkly spread,  
 Which some mad tricksy wind-sprite, half in dread,  
 Snatched from his shoulders in the bleak mid seas.  
 Or rather was it like the windy bed  
 Where broods the old miser Thunder, ill at ease,  
 O'er his rich lightning choicely casketed?  
 Or was't a castle, grim, sun-edged with white,  
 Scaled but by wings of crafty fancy's lending,  
 Or those she makes by spells to climb the height,  
 Gossamer-footed for the safe ascending  
 Of those long rainy stairs of liliated light?

H. G. S.

### BEREAVEMENT.

We do not know the power of earthly anguish,  
 The pangs that shake the soul, of love bereft,  
 Until its tendrils droop, and fade, and languish,  
 With none to fill the void that has been left.  
 We scarce can fathom half the deep emotion  
 That hidden rests within the peaceful heart;  
 Nor guess, beneath the calm and mighty ocean,  
 What treasures lie, until its depths we part.  
 We do not know, until the tree is shaken,  
 How beautiful and ripe the fruit it bore;  
 We do not feel, until the loved are taken,  
 How perfect was that love, for us no more.

R. E. COLLINS.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

"Loved and Lost," by W. F. D.—Your verses are a mixture of power and weakness. There are several good ideas in the poem, and we should think you might do better with care.

"Brown Eyes," &c., by G. E. M.—Thanks. We hope to insert one or more of your poems shortly.

"The Shepherd's Wooing," by A. ROWE.—You have in these lines caught somewhat of the true spirit of pastoral poetry. Your measure, however, occasionally halts; and in pastorals the rhythm should flow smoothly as a rivulet in summer.

"The Hunter's Bride," by J. K. S. B.—You must pay more attention to your rhymes—now and flow, home and come, are not admissible. The poem is pretty as a whole. We quote the two first verses, which are, we think, the best—

"Only an Indian maid,  
With cheeks of soft sweet brown,—  
That found me in the forest glade,  
When I dropt wounded down.

"A maid of the woodlands wild,  
In simple garments gray :  
But yet this dark-eyed gentle child  
Lives in my heart away."

C. M. CLARKE.—Your verses are significant of the possession of more than average poetic fancy. We accept the shorter poem with thanks.

CECIL. Yes; we shall be glad to receive any clever poetical riddles or charades.

"The Silent Guest," &c., by FAITH CHILTERN.—Your verses are above the average of contributions received, and we hope you will soon send us something first-class.

S. E. and ARTHUR.—We shall be happy to see your poem on Christmas, as we want both poems and articles for our Christmas number.

T. WILLIAMS wishes to know whom we consider to be the Prince of Poets. Will our readers reply?

"Aslanga's Knight," &c., by T. R.—Were it not for about half-a-dozen halting lines in the "Knight" we would accept the poem. You say of Death:—

"Hovering here, hovering there,  
Bringing nought but pain and care."

Is the last line strictly true? We think we have heard of some ill-fated individuals to whom Death has been a sweet comforter.

H. T. and Others.—You can order "The Poet's Magazine" of any bookseller.

"Woman," by J. T. B.—We highly approve of the sentiments contained in your poem, but the expression is often weak. You want practice in versification. Shall be glad to hear from you again.

"The Dead Leaf," by Matthew Tate.—Your poem wants finish. As, however, "practice makes perfect," we shall hope to receive something better from you.

T. HARDWICKE.—Thanks. We will insert one of the songs in next number.



"The Child of the Sun-King," by C. D.—Accepted with thanks. "The Song of the Unreturning" is not nearly so well written. We should not have thought that they were by the same author.

"A Happy Dream," etc., by J. M.—Not quite up to standard. The ideas are too common-place. "Three Seasons" would have been inserted had the rhymes been correct. Try again.

A WELL-KNOWN AUTHOR.—Thanks for your good wishes. We will think of your suggestion.

MARK.—You ask for our candid opinion on your contributions, so we feel bound to tell you that you were *not* born to be a poet.

WILFRID.—M.S.S. intended to compete for prizes must be sent in by the 1st of January, 1877. We shall publish the prize poems and articles.

CONSTANCE.—Your song was too late to appear in the present number. The 10th of each month is the latest date for forwarding matter intended for next issue.

ALPHA.—Not suitable.

DECLINED WITH THANKS.—"The Village Well;" "Naon," H. W.; "A Life Story," T.B.; "The Storm;" "Three Sonnets," Malcolm; "Song," B. R.; "To Daisy;" "Deserted;" "Nearly," Conrad; "Fought and Won;" "My Darling," J. C.; "Lost and Found," Arthur M.; "The Minstrel;" "Saved;" "Memories;" "Milton;" "Modern Poets;" "Dawn;" "Rudolph."

### TO OUR READERS.

While the proprietors will be happy to receive contributions from unknown writers, they are—to prevent the Magazine sinking to the level of an amateur publication—making arrangements with various authors of note, who will, from time to time, furnish poems, and articles on poets and poetry. In a word, the main feature of THE POETS' MAGAZINE will be to invite all who possess literary talent to contribute to its pages.

Original contributions only are acceptable.

Each contribution must bear on the first page the sender's name and address.

Rejected MSS. cannot be returned unless post paid. Authors should keep copies of short poems.

Should a reply by letter be required, a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed.

Prizes of one and two Guineas will be given for the two best *Stories in Verse* of about two hundred lines in each, the same sums for the two best *Articles on Poets or Poetry*, and half the same for the two best *Songs or Sonnets*.

A Special Prize of Three Guineas is offered for the best Poem on any Biblical subject from one to two hundred lines, and for the best Essay on the Poetry of the Bible. Manuscripts to be sent by January, 1877.

Authors and Correspondents are requested to apply by letter only, addressed to the Editor of THE POETS' MAGAZINE, 21, Paternoster Row, London.

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# STAY, WARBLER, STAY!

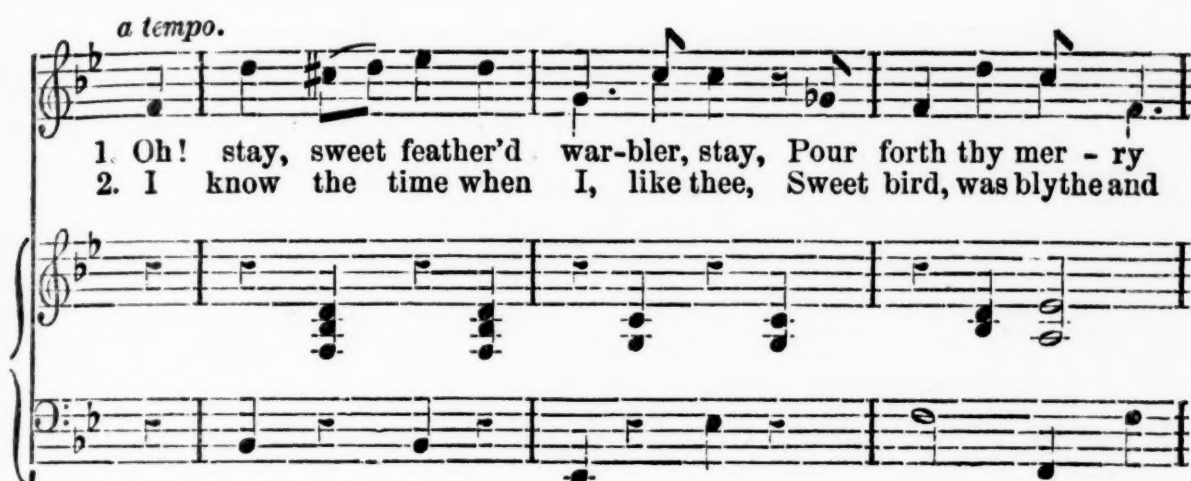
Words by L. M. THORNTON.

Music by LANSDOWNE COTTELL, R.A.M.

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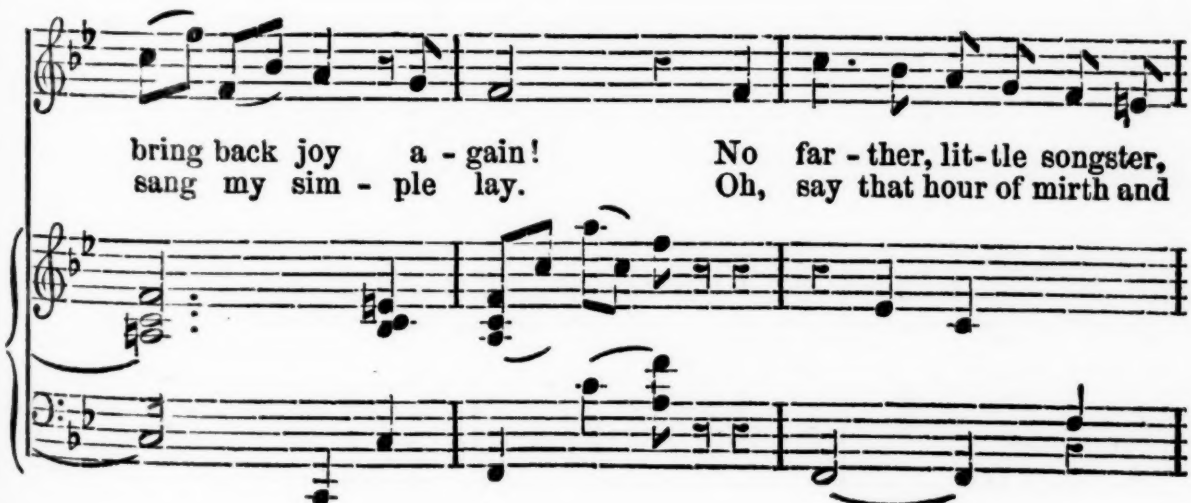
*a tempo.*



1. Oh! stay, sweet feather'd war-bler, stay, Pour forth thy mer - ry  
2. I know the time when I, like thee, Sweet bird, was blythe and



strain; And from my heart drive care a - way, And  
gay; And roam'd the span - gled meadows free, And



bring back joy a - gain! No far - ther, lit - tle songster,  
sang my sim - ple lay. Oh, say that hour of mirth and